

# CORN BUNTING *Miliaria calandra*

2 males singing at Al Beyda on 7 April; c. 50 pairs in the salt marsh E of At Tamimi on 10 April (one nest with 3 eggs); c. 80 pairs in the salt marsh W of At Tamimi on 12 April (one nest with 5 eggs). These are the first confirmed breeding records of this species in Libya.

## Acknowledgements

A first draft of the present paper has been reviewed by Peter Meininger; some interesting records here listed have been shared with Attilio Carapezza; Olga Vitranò provided some references. I thank them very much.

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# Notes on the reproductive behaviour and the nest of the Chestnut-bellied Euphonia (*Euphonia pectoralis*)

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The Chestnut-bellied Euphonia (*Euphonia pectoralis*) is a tanager of southeastern South America, with its major distribution centred in the tropical lowland and montane evergreen forests of southeastern Brazil

(Meyer de Schauensee 1982, Isler & Isler 1987, Ridgely & Tudor 1989, Stotz *et al.* 1996).

Information on the reproductive biology of the species is based on only two nest records. These indicate that it has a breeding period during the southern spring and summer (nest construction: August, Paraguay, Bertoni 1919; nest with eggs: January, Brazil, Snethlage & Schreiner 1929).

On 6 March 1997 we found an active nest of *E. pectoralis* along a steep roadside (narrow edge of secondary forest next to primary forest) of the "Estrada da Graciosa," close to Morretes, Paraná, in the southern Brazilian Atlantic forest (48°55'W, 50°20'S) at an elevation of 355 m. Our attention was drawn to the nest when a male, perching for a short period in mid-level vegetation, flew directly to the well-camouflaged domed moss nest with a side entrance, elongated at the bottom with fine compact rootlets. It was situated in a dead branch of a mature laurel tree (Lauraceae), 4 m high amidst a bulk of smaller epiphytes (bromeliads, gesneriads, e.g., *Codonanthe* sp., tree peppers, *Peperomia* sp.).

The male spent 12 min silently sitting in the nest, probably incubating. On 23 March when one of us (LdA) returned to the site, the nest was abandoned. It was collected and deposited at the Zoological Museum of the Universidade Estadual de Londrina, Paraná, Brazil.

### Nest measurements and description

Height 11 cm, width 10.5 cm. The cone-shaped attached plant material had an additional length of 11.5 cm. The side entrance, almost at the bottom of the nest and slightly elliptical in shape, was 2.5 cm high and 3.5 cm wide. The nest chamber, 0.5 cm deep and 5.5 cm in diameter, was lined with fine rootlets. The compact nest and the attached plant material consisted of moss with fine rootlets woven in.

The northeast nest entrance position was mostly shaded throughout the day, receiving sun only during a short period in the morning.

The nest contained no eggs, but some very small particles of whitish egg shells.

### General remarks

Based on the two previous breeding records of the Chestnut-bellied Euphonia from Paraguay and Brazil (Bertoni 1919, Snethlage & Schreiner 1929), and on our observations from southeastern Brazil, a much longer duration of the reproductive period must be considered (August to March). Whether the eight month long breeding period of the Chestnut-bellied Euphonia is an exception within the genus or simply a matter of geographical, altitudinal and/or local conditions remains unclear. Other sympatric *Euphonia* species of the Brazilian Atlantic forest suggest a much shorter reproductive period from October to January (Isler & Isler 1987): *E. chalybea*, October; *E. musica*, January; *E. violacea*, October; *E. chlorotica*, November).

For *Euphonia* sp (Isler & Isler 1987) male participation in nest construction and brooding is not known. Our observation gives some evidence for male parental care. Euphonias usually place their nests in epiphytes closely attached to tree trunks or on lateral branches. Our record suggests the acceptance by *E. pectoralis* of suitable nest sites in the periphery of a tree if habitat requirements, e.g., the presence of epiphytes and appropriate height, are met.

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## BOOKS RECEIVED

Grimmett, R., Inskipp, T. 1998. *Birds of the Indian Subcontinent*. Pp. 888, 153 colour plates by 12 artists, monochrome distribution maps. Christopher Helm/A & C Black. ISBN 0-7136-4004-9. £55. 24.5 × 18 cm.

Ali, S. & Ripley, S. D. (with contributions from Roberts, T. J.). 1998. *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan*, Vol. 9, Robins to wagtails. Second edition. Pp. 310, 10 colour plates; numerous line drawings, monochrome distribution maps. Oxford University Press/Bombay Natural History Society. ISBN 0-19-563695-3. £21. 24.5 × 16.5 cm.

In recent years India has, at least for Europeans, become an easily and fairly cheaply accessible destination for tourists. Its bird life is rich with many potentially confusing groups, e.g. pipits, warblers, laughingthrushes and babblers. The standard texts available for many years have been the many works by Salim Ali including, of course, the 10-volume *Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan*, co-authored by Dillon Ripley.